

NOMINATION OF DIANE BLAIR TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE COR- PORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING

Y 4. C 73/7: S. HRG. 103-346

Nomination of Diane Blair to be a M...

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE,
SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION
UNITED STATES SENATE
ONE HUNDRED THIRD CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

SEPTEMBER 27, 1993

Printed for the use of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation



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NOMINATION OF DIANE BLAIR TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 1993

**U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION,
Washington, DC.**

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:34 p.m. in room SR-253, Russell Senate Office Building, Hon. Daniel K. Inouye presiding.

Staff members assigned to this hearing: John D. Windhausen, Jr., Staff counsel, and Rebecca A. Kojm, professional staff member; and Emily J. Gallop, minority professional staff member, and Susan Adams, minority deputy staff director.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR INOUYE

Senator INOUYE. It is my pleasure to chair this hearing to consider the nomination of Diane Blair to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Ms. Blair has been a leading participant in the efforts to improve educational television and civil rights, and I am pleased that the administration has chosen to nominate someone with experience in the field of public broadcasting and who has demonstrated a commitment to public service.

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting continues to face several significant issues in the coming years. As new technologies become much more accessible, they also present new opportunities for CPB to expand its mission. Direct-to-home satellite TV, video compression, new standards for digital transmission, all require CPB to remain at the leading edge of scientific and market advances.

At the same time, CPB must recognize the failures of our current educational system. No one involved in education can claim success when more than 90 million of our citizens remain illiterate. The ability to read is essential for becoming a happy and productive member of our society, and we all must take responsibility for this enormous failure of our educational system.

Finally, CPB must make greater efforts to comply with the spirit and intent, as well as the letter of the amendments to the CPB authorization bill which was passed by the last Congress.

After many detailed and productive discussions with Senators on both sides of the aisle last year, Congress unanimously agreed that the decisionmaking process within the corporation must be opened to greater public input and review.

Congress correctly chose not to apply the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act to CPB, because it is not an agency of the Federal Government. Nevertheless, it is appropriate for the taxpayers of this Nation to have an opportunity to review the activities of CPB, and to provide their views in an open setting on how the corporation chooses to spend the money that Congress appropriates, and only in this way can public broadcasting truly be responsive to the needs of the local community, and I can assure one and all that I intend to continue to work with CPB to ensure that it meets these goals. Mr. Chairman, your comments, please.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR HOLLINGS

The CHAIRMAN. Today the committee is holding a hearing on the nomination of Diane Blair to be a member of the board of directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. I welcome Ms. Blair to the committee.

If confirmed, Ms. Blair would be the second Democrat on a board of 10. As a member of the board of CPB, Ms. Blair will have an opportunity to continue her distinguished career in public service. She has been a leader of educational television within public broadcasting in her home State of Arkansas for over 20 years. She also has had a exemplary academic career at the University of Arkansas and has been involved in other important public-sector activities.

The CPB faces the constant challenge of identifying and funding the highest quality broadcast programming. These choices are not always easy. The CPB has a mandate to ensure that all Americans are represented in broadcast programming. The CPB Act also requires the corporation to demonstrate balance and objectivity. These goals are difficult to meet and require continual reexamination by the public and by Congress.

The role of public broadcasting becomes even more essential with the increased indecency and violence on network television and cable. The standards for what now is acceptable on commercial television and cable appear to have declined. It is important that we maintain our commitment to quality, educational programming on public broadcasting to ensure that television fulfills its potential as a source of learning and enjoyment for children everywhere in this country.

I look forward to hearing the testimony of Ms. Blair this afternoon.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator INOUYE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Before I call upon our distinguished nominee, may I call upon Senator McCain?

Senator MCCAIN. I have no opening statement, Mr. Chairman. Welcome, Ms. Blair.

Senator INOUYE. Senator Stevens.

Senator STEVENS. Mr. Chairman, I too welcome Ms. Blair and look forward to the hearing. I see our colleague is here, and wishes to introduce his constituent, so I think I will defer also.

Senator INOUYE. On behalf of the committee, we are pleased to have with us the Hon. Richard Pryor, Member of the U.S. Senate from the great State of Arkansas. Senator Pryor.

STATEMENT OF HON. DAVID PRYOR, U.S. SENATOR FROM ARKANSAS

Senator PRYOR. Mr. Chairman, if it is all right, I think I am going to have Professor Blair introduce me as David Pryor. That was the joke in our office this morning, Mr. Chairman. On the masthead they did refer to me as Richard Pryor. I always tell people, he is the rich Pryor.

I am honored to be here, Mr. Chairman, on behalf of our friend, Diane Blair, and I am very privileged to be before this very distinguished committee, before you, Mr. Chairman, before Senator Stevens, and before Senator McCain.

I would also, Mr. Chairman, like to ask unanimous consent at this time that I may have placed in the record a statement by our colleague, Senator Dale Bumpers, in behalf of this nominee.

Senator INOUYE. Without objection.

Senator PRYOR. Senator Bumpers is traveling this afternoon. He is due back in Washington tonight. He wanted to be here for this hearing, but he has written a very eloquent statement endorsing Diane Blair for this position.

Mr. Chairman, also, if I might, as a point of privilege, take an opportunity of making known to the committee that Diane Blair's father, William K. Divers, is with us today in the hearing room. He is sitting to our left.

Mr. Divers was appointed by former President Truman to the Federal Home Loan Bank Board, reappointed by President Eisenhower, and he told me a few moments ago he is no stranger to the nomination process, having been confirmed two times by the U.S. Senate.

Senator INOUYE. Mr. Divers, would you care to come forward and sit in with us?

Mr. DIVERS. No, thank you, sir. [Laughter.]

Senator PRYOR. Mr. Chairman, it is a real honor for me to introduce to the committee this afternoon a teacher, an author, a politically active citizen, a fine person, and a long-time friend, Diane Blair, who has been nominated to be a member of the board of directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

Diane has had a significant impact on Arkansas education, politics, and civic responsibility, and today I hope we will take the opportunity to make her talents available to the entire country.

Diane Blair may not be at this moment a household name, like, say Bill Clinton, but if you go around Arkansas and talk to graduates of the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, I will wager that most of those graduates not only know who Diane Blair is, but they will speak of her with respect and admiration.

In our State, Mr. Chairman and colleagues, she is truly a legend. She has taught a generation of Arkansas people, Arkansans, about the intricacies of politics, the duties of citizenship, and the greatness of the American political tradition, in her post as professor of political science at the University of Arkansas since 1968.

Diane's teaching excellence has been officially recognized by her receipt of the 1982 Master Teacher Award from the Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences at Fayetteville, and her selection by the University of Arkansas students as an outstanding faculty member in both 1976 and 1978.

Just last Friday, when my staff was reviewing our Monday schedule, our administrative aide, Frank Thomas, reminisced about sitting with some 200 other students in the ballroom of the old Student Union in Fayetteville, for one of Diane Blair's classic political science classes. That was the year 1972.

In fact, a former aide of mine, Missy Darwin, who is now in the Protocol Division of the State Department, was a student of Diane Blair's in the mid-eighties, and Missy is now engaged to Diane's son Bill, so you can see that Diane has woven herself into many lives of so many Arkansans.

She is not only a teacher but a scholar, having researched and written numerous books, articles, and book reviews. She has developed a particular expertise in the area of Arkansas electoral politics, and her writings on this subject have left an indelible mark in this field.

Recently, her scholarship was recognized nationally when she was appointed a guest scholar at the Brookings Institution for the spring of 1993, where her charge was to write an oral history of Bill Clinton's campaign for the Presidency.

Diane Blair is no laboratory political scientist, nor theoretical scholar alone, for she has been active throughout her life in the real world of government and politics. Early in her career, Diane served in this city, in the Nation's capital, on the staff of a Presidential committee and in two different posts of the U.S. Senate.

She has also served the Democratic Party at various times on the county, State, and national level. She has been on various other task forces, committees, and commissions, examining important public policy issues of the State.

Finally, in her most recent political outing, Diane served as senior researcher on President Clinton's 1992 campaign for the Presidency.

Very well, you might say, Diane is a good teacher, she is a great scholar, she is a political activist, but what does she know about educational television? Mr. Chairman and colleagues, the answer is, a great deal. Diane has been a member of the Arkansas Educational Television Commission since 1980, she has served as both the chair and the vice chair of the committee, she also chaired the Governor's Task Force on Satellite Television Instruction from 1986 to 1988.

Diane clearly possesses the knowledge and the practical experience necessary for the post to which she has been nominated. More than that, Mr. Chairman, she cares, and she especially cares about the unique role of public television in our daily lives.

In summation, I think Diane's record speaks for itself. She is a woman with the skill, the experience, and the motivation for the task ahead of her. Moreover, she is very much a decent woman who is the kind of person I think we all want to see involved in Government in this country.

Members of the committee, to borrow a phrase from entertainment television, we think that Diane is clearly ready for prime time, and I hope you will agree with me, and you will approve her nomination at the appropriate time.

Thank you very much, Mr Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Senator Bumpers follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR BUMPERS

Mr. Chairman, Senator Danforth, I am very happy and proud to be here today to tell you about my friend Diane Blair, the President's extraordinary nominee to the Board of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. She will be a wonderful addition to the Board and CPB will be much stronger for her contribution.

Diane was born and raised right here in Washington, D.C. She graduated from Cornell University in 1959 as a member of Phi Beta Kappa. Following her college days she took a job in Washington with the President's Committee on Governmental Contracts. Later she worked for the Senate Special Committee on Unemployment and as a speechwriter for Senator Stuart Symington.

In 1963 Diane became an Arkansan. She pursued a Master's Degree in Political Science at the University of Arkansas. She received her Masters in 1967 and has taught Political Science at Fayetteville ever since. She became a full professor in 1990. She has twice been named "Outstanding Faculty Member" by her students and received the Fulbright College "Master Teacher" Award.

Diane Blair has become an Arkansas Institution. She is the preeminent authority on the politics of our state and region. She has taught for many years at the University of Arkansas. Students there have had the benefit of her wisdom in the classroom and beyond. She has influenced so many young people and helped them understand our democracy and to appreciate the importance of public affairs. She has made politics interesting.

Diane is not just a dynamic teacher. She is a respected and substantial scholar. Her list of publications goes on for pages. Her subjects range from Arkansas politics in general to precise analysis of recent elections and electoral trends. She has edited the Journal of Senator Hattie Caraway, Arkansas's first woman senator. She has written about Senator Pryor's tenure as Governor. More than a decade ago, she was one of the first scholars to write seriously about a promising young Arkansas politician named Bill Clinton. Her analyses of the 1984 and 1988 Presidential elections in the South are some of the best political analyses I have ever seen. Diane has written a number of pieces on the role of gender in politics that are very helpful to anyone who really wants to understand the dynamics of modern American electoral politics. The works of Diane Blair are a key to understanding southern state and regional politics in a national context.

As the preeminent academic authority on politics in Arkansas, Diane has played an active practical role in Arkansas and national politics. She been both friend and counselor to me and to the President and First Lady. In 1992, while on leave from the University she served as Senior Researcher with the Clinton/Gore campaign. During the spring of this year, she was a Guest Scholar at the Brookings Institution. Many others in public life in Arkansas have had the benefit of her counsel. She is full of wisdom and we all value her opinion very much.

Diane is no stranger to public broadcasting. Until her nomination she served on the board of the Arkansas Educational Television Network (AETN). She was an organizer and former Chairperson of the AETN Foundation. In 1980, Governor Clinton appointed her to the Educational Television Commission. From 1986 to 1988 Diane served as chairperson of the Governor's Task Force on Satellite Television Instruction, leading the pioneering effort in distance learning in Arkansas. Her commitment has been a lasting one. She was reappointed in 1988 and served until her nomination for this post. Diane has had long interest and deep involvement with public broadcasting in Arkansas. She has built and supported the public broadcasting institutions of our state with her committed actions and with her generous contributions.

Diane believes deeply in the mission of public broadcasting as a tool for teaching and as a source of the broadest spectrum of programming. These principles are the source of her commitment. These principles were the basis for her repeated appointment to important public broadcasting positions in Arkansas. These principles, her broad experience and her years of scholarly and practical achievement will make her an excellent addition to the Board of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. I urge her swift confirmation.

Senator INOUYE, thank you very much, Senator Pryor. I will not repeat that error again. It is David.

Senator PRYOR. Mr. Chairman, when I first came to the Senate, one day on the Associated Press wire there was some story about Senator Richard Pryor, Democrat of Arkansas said so-and-so today, and someone down in the carpenter's shop, a very nice person, made a little sign for my desk, and it says, "My name is not Rich-

ard," and I still have it. I get letters every day, "Senator Richard Pryor," and I take all that with a great deal of fun and have a good time with it.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator INOUYE. Well, from your statement, she is not only ready for prime time, I think she has been in prime time already.

But before I call upon the nominee, I have been advised that her husband, Mr. Jim Blair, is in the audience. How about coming forward to give your wife some moral support?

Mr. BLAIR. Believe me, Mr. Chairman, she does not need it, but I am glad to be here.

Senator INOUYE. It is my pleasure to call upon you, Ms. Blair.

STATEMENT OF DIANE BLAIR, NOMINEE TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING

Ms. BLAIR. Thank you very much, and let me begin, Senator, by expressing my sincere appreciation to you and your colleagues for your presence here today.

I want you to know that I am deeply honored by my nomination to the board of directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Especially at a time when so much of commercial television and radio ranges from the inane to the offensive, I can think of no more rewarding responsibility than this, working to ensure the public's continued access to quality programs, programs that educate our children, stretch our minds, and uplift our spirits.

My interest in public broadcasting, as you have heard, is long-standing. I have served for more than a dozen years as a commissioner of the Arkansas Educational Television Network. This experience has not only given me a familiarity with the governance of and issues facing public broadcasting, but it has sharpened my appreciation for just how much these services mean to the public, especially to viewers and listeners outside the Nation's major metropolitan areas.

Viewers of the Arkansas television network, AETN, were recently invited to send the station their candid evaluations of its programs, and I would like to share just a few of these comments with the committee. I think the voices of these thoughtful citizens speak much more eloquently than could I about the gratitude felt by many millions of Americans for public broadcasting. Let me quote:

AETN is my family's lifeline to uplifting, enriching cultural events which would be beyond my geographical or financial reach if public television did not exist.

Another:

AETN, in my opinion, is the only television station in this area that attempts to bring substantive, nonstereotypical programs about African-Americans. AETN seems to be helping to define us by focusing on our positive contributions to society.

Another:

AETN brings the world to my door and gives me a view I never could have otherwise, and shows me how beautiful the world is in every corner. It gives me wondrous awakenings in science, broadening views of politics.

And finally:

I am interested in learning more about my environment, my psyche, other people and cultures, and new things I have not even dreamed of. I have found AETN to fill this learning need.

Additionally, many parents wrote to express their appreciation to public television as the only reliable source of nonviolent, non-commercial, intelligent, and wholesome programs for children.

I would also like to quote one other Arkansan, President Bill Clinton. Speaking recently at the 25th Anniversary of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, President Clinton described public broadcasting as our "intellectual anchor," offering programs that sharpen our memories and enhance our ability to imagine the future.

With then-Governor Clinton's enthusiastic encouragement and support in Arkansas, we expanded enormously the State's use of public television to address and serve specific State needs. The result was hundreds of high school students in remote rural areas taking advanced math and foreign language courses, thousands of adult Arkansans each year receiving their GED on TV, and tens of thousands of families receiving reliable information on everything from AIDS to teen suicide.

In short, I have worked hard at the State level to strengthen the quality, visibility, and utility of public radio and television, and I am very eager to perform a similar service at the national level. If confirmed, I look forward to working with this committee in particular and with the Congress in general to ensure that the American people are receiving the greatest possible return from their investment in the Nation's public broadcasting system.

[The biographical data and prehearing questions and answers of Ms. Blair follow:]

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Name: Blair, Diane Divers; address: 101 Tanglebriar, Fayetteville, AR 72701; business address: 428 Old Main, U. of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR 72701.

Position to which nominated: Board, Corporation of Public Broadcasting; date of nomination: August 6, 1993.

Date of birth: October 25, 1938; place of birth: Washington, DC.

Marital status: Married; full name of spouse: James Burton Blair; names and ages of children: Heather E. Blair, 34; Arden S. Blair-Clark, 32; James R. Blair, 31; William R. Kincaid, 27; and Kathryn L. Kincaid, 24.

Education: Miami U. (Oxford, OH), 9/55-9/56; Cornell University, 9/56-6/59, BA; and University of Arkansas, 9/64-5/67, MA.

Employment: 1968-present, University of Arkansas, Instructor, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, now Professor of Political Science; 1960-63, Senator Stuart Symington, Legislative Secretary; 1960, Special Committee on Unemployment Problems, Research Assistant; and 1959-60, President's Committee on Government Contracts, Contract Analyst.

Government experience: 1960-63, Senator Stuart Symington, Legislative Secretary; 1960, Special Committee on Unemployment Problems, Research Assistant; 1959-60, President's Committee on Government Contracts, Contract Analyst; Arkansas Educational Television Commission (member, 1980-93; Chair, 1985-86; Vice Chairman, 1983-85); Governor's Task Force on Satellite Television Instruction, 1986-88 (Chair); Governor's Civil Rights Task Force, 1992-93 (member); Governor's Committee on Public Employees Rights, 1977 (Chair); Governor's Commission on the Status of Women, 1971-77 (Chair, 1971-73; Chair, Education Task Force, 1973-77); and Board, Washington County Emergency Medical Services, 1980-82.

Political affiliations: Senior Researcher, Clinton Presidential Campaign, 1992; Member, Platform Committee, Dem. Natl. Convention, 1992; Chair, Platform Committee, Ark. Dem. Convention, 1992; Member, Washington County Dem. Central Committee, 1968 to present; Member, Dem. State Committee, 1971-84; Vice Chair,

Ark. Delegation to Dem. Natl. Convention, 1972; and Faculty Adviser, U. of Arkansas Chapter Young Democrats, 1973-85.

1983

State and County Democratic Committees	\$200
National Democratic Party	50

1984

State and County Democratic Committees	40
National Democratic Party	95

Candidates:

David Pryor	500
Americans with Hart	25
Paul Riviere	100
Jim Hunt	40

1985

State and County Democratic Committees	30
National Democratic Party	95

Candidates:

Dale Bumpers	100
Bob Packwood	35
Steve Clark	25

1986

State and County Democratic Committees	50
National Democratic Party	80

Candidates:

Mary Jo Day	100
David Matthews	1500
Harriet Woods	60
Bill Clinton	100
Dale Bumpers	500

1987

State and County Democratic Committees	65
National Democratic Party	70

1988

State and County Democratic Committees	234
National Democratic Party	80

Candidates:

Marilyn Johnson	50
Jim Lingle	250
John Burrow	250

1989

Texas Democratic Women	20
National Democratic Party	40

1990

State and Counts Democratic Committees	153
National Democratic Party	130

Candidates:

Bill Clinton	1500
Mark Pryor	150
John Miller	100
Ann Richards	500
Citizens for Harkin	500
Bill Clinton	1500
Sue Madison	50
Ann Henry	75
Lois Imhoff	50

1991

State and County Democratic Committees	1060
National Democratic Party	90

Candidates:

Bill Harrison	100
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1992

State and County Democratic Committees	250
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Candidates:

Eddie Johnson	100
C. Delores Tucker	100
Carol Moseley-Braun	100
John Pagan	100
Blanche Lambert	250

Anna Eshoo	100
G. Ferraro	100
Clinton/Gore Compliance Fund	1000

Memberships: American, Midwest, Southern, Western, Southwest, Arkansas Political Science Associations (Development Committee, APSA; V.O. Key Book Award Committee, SPSA); Adjunct Scholar, Center for the Study of Federalism; Pi Beta Phi; U. of Arkansas Alumni; President's Council for Cornell Women; Friends of AETN; Friends of KUAF; National, Arkansas Women's Political Caucus; University Museum Associate; Washington County Planned Parenthood; Arkansas and Washington County Historical Societies; Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families; and Friends of Fayetteville City Library.

Honors and awards: Phi Beta Kappa (Cornell U.); Pi Sigma Alpha (U. of Arkansas); invited commencement speaker, Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences, U. of Ark. (5/91); Virginian Ledbetter Award for Best Book Published about Arkansas History or Culture in Years 1988-90, for Arkansas Government and Politics (4/91); Guest Scholar, Brookings Institution (Spring, 1993); Master Teacher Award, Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences (1982); Selected by students as "Outstanding Faculty Member" (1976 and 1978); Selected by Arkansas press Women for Horizons, 100 Arkansas Women of Achievement (1978); and B&PW Award, "Contributions to City Fayetteville" (1977).

Published writings: May be found in the committee's files.

QUESTIONS ASKED BY THE COMMITTEE AND ANSWERS THERETO BY MS. BLAIR

Question. What initiatives would you undertake as a member of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) Board of Directors? What issues are of particular interest to you?

Answer. I think it would be premature for me to propose undertakings for the CPB until I have begun working with the Board and become more familiar with its present operations. In general, I am especially interested in the original educational mission of public broadcasting, and hope to promote even further cooperation between CPB and other public agencies and private associations addressing some of our nation's most intractable educational problems.

Question. In general, are there any changes you would advocate should be made in the policies and procedures?

Answer. Again, I believe it would be premature for me to advocate particular changes in CPB policies and procedures.

Question. One of the issues that has arisen repeatedly in connection with the CPB is the propriety of federal funding for public broadcasting. Do you support federal funding as a method of financing public radio and television?

Answer. Yes. I think that the federal funds that have been appropriated for public broadcasting are not only proper but are among the wisest investments the government has made.

Question. What are your views on alternative financing, such as enhanced underwriting for public broadcasting?

Answer. While the CPB must guard against the commercialization of public broadcasting, I believe that enhanced underwriting has thus far been an appropriate method for providing necessary funds.

Question. One of the major goals of the CPB has been the expansion of public broadcasting service to unserved or underserved parts of the country. While this goal has been largely fulfilled for public television, there are still many parts of the country that are not served by public radio. Do you believe that the CPB needs to focus additional resources on expansion of public radio service?

Answer. My experience in Arkansas had given me an acute appreciation for the particular value of public television and radio in remote and rural areas, and I will be very supportive of efforts to provide broadcasting service to unserved and underserved areas.

Question. In that same vein, concern has been expressed about the need for more radio programming which address the particular needs of audiences in rural areas and minority audiences. Do you believe that this concern is one that the CPB should address?

Answer. One of public broadcasting's principal priorities is to extend services to otherwise unserved segments of the population, such as rural and minority audiences. I am familiar with and wholeheartedly support the particular efforts public broadcasting has been making in recent years to better serve minority audiences, but I think the CPB must always be alert to and responsive to concerns that particular regions or groups are not being adequately addressed.

Question. A recent report recommended that greater should be provided for national programming, rather than for local stations. The CPB authorizing legislation provides for more funding directly to local stations. Do you believe the legislation authorizing the CPB should be amended to incorporate some or all of the suggestions made by this report?

Answer. The Twentieth Century Fund has correctly identified the problem of chronic underfunding of public broadcasting. This underfunding exists across the range of public broadcasting activities including local operations as well as national programming. The question is how to find funding for all of the activities of public broadcasting, not sacrificing one part of its activities for another. Until these kinds of questions have been examined and answered, I think it would be premature to amend CPB's authorizing statute.

Question. Some observers believe that public broadcasting should receive a percentage of the royalties from the sale of products involving characters that appear on public television stations. What are your thoughts on this issue?

Answer. I do believe that public broadcasting should and does benefit from the ancillary use of its program materials. Some way should be found to provide an equitable share for public broadcasting from the revenue from merchandising as well.

Senator INOUYE. Ms. Blair, thank you very much. I have several questions I would like to submit to you for your study and response.

But if I may, I would like to ask too, at this time—most of us here are concerned about the quality of children's programming on television. As an expert on public education and public television, how would you rate children's programming at this time? Adequate, inadequate?

Ms. BLAIR. I think we could always do better. I do think that I would give it an A on public television. I would give it a significantly lower grade on commercial television. I am very proud of Sesame Street, of the Reading Rainbow, of Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego? I think we are doing a better job every year across the whole broad spectrum of learning, from learning readiness with preschool children, all the way through keeping children interested through the critical junior high and high school years.

So, I would give the Corporation for Public Broadcasting a very high grade on its children's broadcasting, but we can always do better and should.

Senator INOUYE. Recently, a local newspaper gave some extensive coverage to Barney and his Friends. Do you believe, from your experience, that CPB should profit from a CPB-funded program if it is commercially successful?

Ms. BLAIR. I do, sir. And it is my understanding that generally the Corporation for Public Broadcasting does make an arrangement with programs that it is funding in the production stage, so that something like 50 percent of any profits that come in will be fed back into children's programming.

Barney, I believe, was a very exceptional case, so I have been told, in that Barney was privately produced and it was brought to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting after it had already been produced. But as a general rule, I certainly think that if there is profit—which is very rare indeed, most shows do not have profit—that the public that invested in it should also be its beneficiaries.

Senator INOUYE. Thank you very much, Ms. Blair.

Senator McCAIN.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Blair, President Clinton's budget request for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting was approximately \$292 million. The

House figure was exactly the same. Do you think that the CPB should receive more than the President's request?

Ms. BLAIR. I, of course, have not been part of the process for developing this year's appropriations, nor have I ever discussed with President Clinton a specific funding level. I can tell you that my general impression, looking at public broadcasting, is that we are underfunded rather than overfunded. That in comparison, certainly, with other nations in the world, but more importantly with our own needs here in America, that there is much more that could be done through investing in public broadcasting than has been done. But I am not prepared to speak to a specific dollar amount this year.

Senator MCCAIN. President Clinton, during the campaign, July 26, 1992, said:

While I support public television, I don't know that we have to spend more money on it now. In the next few years we have to focus most of our increased investment on investment, on just that, on those things which will generate more wealth for the United States.

But you believe that the Corporation for Public Broadcasting is underfunded.

Ms. BLAIR. I think that public broadcasting is underfunded relative to the needs that I see that could be filled. There are still some areas of the country that have not been reached, primarily by public radio. I think that is a serious omission.

I think that there are possibilities, particularly in addressing the Nation's education goals, of doing more through use of this telecommunications network. Again, based on my experience at the Arkansas level, we worked very close to the bone, and I know that in some relatively resource poor States that is true, that we are always striving to get more from private contributions and from the corporate sector.

So, I do not have a feeling that it is excessively funded, but I do not feel knowledgeable enough about how the exact dollar amounts were arrived at this year to comment on that particular funding level.

Senator MCCAIN. You are aware, of course, that in recent years there has been an explosion in information and access, numbers of radio stations. More importantly, television channels, A&E, Discovery, many others that were not available at the time that the Corporation for Public Broadcasting began. You are aware of that. You do not think that that has had any impact on the ability of the public to receive information?

Ms. BLAIR. It has had—

Senator MCCAIN. For example—may I finish?

Ms. BLAIR. Yes, sir.

Senator MCCAIN. For example, I find A&E Channel and Discovery Channel far higher quality, generally speaking, than what is on public broadcasting, and I know a lot of my constituents share that view. They seem to be able to get along without Government funding and provide, in the view of many, higher quality information.

Ms. BLAIR. I think that it is wonderful that more quality programs are occasionally presented that are accessible to some people. But only about 60 percent of all Americans now have access or are subscribers to cable television, and a much smaller percent-

age are subscribers to what are sometimes called the premium channels where some of these shows are available.

So, that although there are a greater variety of programs being produced, they do not have the universal accessibility that public television, which now reaches 98 percent of the population, does. So, I would say that, in addition to which some of those are still—The Learning Channel permits something like 12 commercials per hour, which is very different from the children's programming on public television which very much shies away from trying to push products for children in connection with its shows.

Senator McCAIN. You have just said that public broadcasting reaches 98 percent of the people?

Ms. BLAIR. Public television.

Senator McCAIN. Public television.

Ms. BLAIR. Yes.

Senator McCAIN. But it is still underfunded.

Ms. BLAIR. Yes. Public radio does not yet reach nearly those numbers.

Senator McCAIN. I see. When we authorized the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the act called upon the CPB to review programming and take steps to ensure objectivity and balance in programs of a controversial nature. Are you aware of any steps that the CPB has taken?

Ms. BLAIR. It is my understanding that they have very much heard the messages that they have been receiving from Congress about the need for greater sensitivity to fairness and objectivity and balance, that they have begun a program called Open to the Public, which is at least a beginning attempt to address those needs.

And, again, I must tell you, Senator, in Arkansas, our public television station would not have survived and flourished had we not been extremely sensitive to the views and the values of Arkansans. So, I have some sensitivity to these issues and I think that the programs sponsored by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting should always be fair, and that there should be balance in the programming.

Senator McCAIN. The law calls upon the CPB to review programming. In your opinion, can the CPB review programming without looking at it?

Ms. BLAIR. It is an interesting question. I have not yet seen how this is being done or it will be done, but it is my understanding that some panels of journalists will be asked to assess programs for their accuracy, their objectivity, and their fairness, and then this will be reported to the CPB. But, again, I have not yet been part of that process, Senator.

Senator McCAIN. Well, I am of the view that the CPB is in total violation of the law that was passed reauthorizing the CPB. I know of no program that has been changed or canceled or other initiatives taken to comply with the balance or fairness that we expected of the CPB when we reauthorized it.

I also do not know how in the world, at this particular time when we are talking about not having money to feed the hungry, take care of the ill and sick in our society, that we can justify a \$28 mil-

lion increase in appropriations. I certainly respect your views on all of those issues.

I will tell you this, Ms. Blair. The people I represent—and I do not speak for the people in Arkansas. Obviously, Senator Pryor does. The people that I represent in Arizona do not think that they get balanced programs. They do not think that there is unbiased reporting, whether it be from NPR or so-called news stations, and they are getting tired of funding programs that have a clear and definite liberal bias to them.

Now, perhaps I would not be as disturbed about this if it were not for my particular philosophical bent. I would hope I would be concerned no matter what it is, because I do not believe that the people of America, of the United States, who pay for public broadcasting get a fair and unbiased view. And I am sure you will do everything that you can to see that they do, and I congratulate you on your nomination.

Ms. BLAIR. Thank you, Senator.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator INOUYE. Thank you.

Senator Stevens.

Senator STEVENS. Ms. Blair, I always like to enquire of prospective members of the board if they have read the act?

Ms. BLAIR. You are going to embarrass me, sir. I have read everything I have been able to get my hands on, but I have not read the original authorizing act.

Senator STEVENS. Well, Senator Goldwater and I had a great deal to do with the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. One of the things we urged the Congress to do, and they did, was to forward fund the public stations. Because we found that with the delay caused by other issues in the Congress, we were finally getting around to passing appropriations bills that should be passed by October 1 in March or April of the next year. And it was very hard for public stations to exist between October 1 and the time when they finally got their money, as they were always funded on the lowest figure of either the House or the Senate bill, or the existing law, and it ended up in just chaos.

So, we have forward funded these entities that you will be overseeing on the board. In 1994 they will get \$275 million. In 1995 they get \$292.5—I think it is .5—million. And at the request of several of us on the Appropriations Committee, we have taken that up to \$320 million for 1996.

Some people forget that as they read these figures. They think we are talking about this coming fiscal year being at that higher figure. It is 1996 that we are talking about, and that is just the rate of the lowest inflation figure we have used in the budget to date.

I wanted to ask you if you had read the statute because one that I am particularly interested in is paragraph 396, title XLVII, in subsection a(6). It states:

It is in the public interest to encourage the development of programming that involves creative risks and that addresses the needs of unserved and underserved audiences, particularly children and minorities.

Now, that has been my interest. I think it was Senator Goldwater's interest, really basically, in terms of the needs of the In-

dian people. Mine is the Alaskan native people in general and rural Alaska. Many of the places that are unserved in the country are still in my State.

And I have here, Mr. Chairman, the projection for 1994 and 1995 and 1996 as to what will happen to the Alaska radio stations that are public stations if the funding level is kept at \$292.6 million, as is suggested. It is not .5, it is .6, I hope we will correct that record.

But let me ask you, in terms of the activities of the board, have you been briefed on the needs of some of these areas, rural areas, such as the one that I live in?

Ms. BLAIR. I have not been briefed by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. They have been very responsive to questions that I have asked.

And that has been one of my areas of concern. And I think that although certainly Arkansas and Alaska are dissimilar in many ways, I do think I have a great sensitivity to just what kind of a lifeline public television and public radio represents to people living in remote areas where they do not have cable, they do not have much of any kind of commercial radio and television, and they are very very dependent upon this. So, I would be very sympathetic with the kinds of interests that you have, Senator.

Senator STEVENS. The first public stations were in my State. At my request we took some of the military stations and extended the radio and television that was made available to the military bases in Alaska to some of the native villages on the west coast.

And it became apparent that that was successful, so we decided that we would go all the way and really expand the Corporation for Public Broadcasting so it would be—it was already in existence, but they really were not into stations in areas which were totally unserved and underserved.

Have you ever been to Alaska?

Ms. BLAIR. I have not.

Senator STEVENS. Well, Mr. Blair, you have got a job ahead of you, here. I really hope that you will ask questions when you get to the board about the underserved and unserved areas of the country, and about the need of the minorities, particularly the audience of children.

Many of the programs—I bet you did not know that my State pays to carry these programs out to areas that are totally unserved. Did you know that?

Ms. BLAIR. I did not know that.

Senator STEVENS. We have what we call the rural Alaska television network. We carry some of those at our State's expense out further than the stations can go so that the State as a whole is able to experience common access, particularly for the hours that children watch television.

I think it is important to us to have this, and I would hope that—I will tell you this. We will continue to fight for the \$320 million. The net effect of going down to \$292.6 million would be to reduce the stations in Alaska to less than they got in 1993, because 1994 and 1995 are built upon inflation minimums. And when we look in terms of real dollars, the actually effective dollars that will be available to spend in these unserved and underserved areas will be

less than we are spending this year. I do not think that is fair. I hope that you will argue for that when you get to the board.

I am pleased that you took the time to come visit me. I would have a lot more questions, but we have already visited, Mr. Chairman.

With regard to Barney, I think that Barney is something that the board ought to take care of. There is an existing law that that should not have happened in the first place, so I hope that we do not penalize the viewers in 1996 because of a mistake that was made in 1991 or 1992.

Thank you very much.

Ms. BLAIR. Thank you, Senator.

Senator INOUYE. Thank you, Senator Stevens. Ms. Blair, if I may follow Senator Stevens' question on the matter of Native Americans, I would hope that you will visit with your fellow commissioners and discuss the matter of extending production contracts and programming contracts to Native Americans because most of the programs that are viewed by Native Americans are not relevant. After all, they are made for non-Native American audiences. And there are many very talented and skilled artisans and artists in the Native American community. I hope you will look into this. I think we owe them something.

Ms. BLAIR. Thank you, Senator, I will be certain to.

Senator INOUYE. With that, I would like to thank you very much, Ms. Blair, and I can assure we will do everything to expedite your clearance. Your papers have been all cleared and everything is in shipshape. At the earliest we will send your nomination to the floor, and congratulations once again.

Ms. BLAIR. Thank you very much, Senator.

Senator INOUYE. Thank you, Senator Pryor.

Senator PRYOR. Thank you, Senator.

Senator INOUYE. The hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:10 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

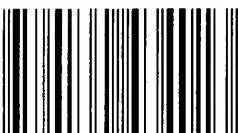


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